

VZCZCXRO2886
OO RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC
DE RUEHBJ #6960 2291026
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 171026Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4139
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 016960

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/17/2031
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: ACTIVIST LAWYER GAO ZHISHENG
DETAINED IN SHANDONG PROVINCE

Classified By: Classified by Political Internal Unit Chief Susan Thornton. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Beijing-based democracy activist Hu Jia telephoned poloff August 17 to report that Gao Zhisheng, a Beijing-based lawyer who has drawn Chinese Government ire for defending dissidents, was detained on August 15 in Shandong Province. Gao was having lunch with a mutual friend of Hu's when two people presumed to be non-uniformed security officials approached Gao and took him away. Gao's family has not heard from him since then, Hu told poloff.

¶2. (C) In the recent past, Gao has written open letters critical of the Communist Party's mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners, organized a hunger strike to protest human rights abuses and defended pro-democracy activists, religious figures and petitioners. His law firm was shuttered last year and his law license suspended for one year. Most recently, Gao helped to organize Beijing-based attorneys to travel to Shandong Province to protest at the postponed July 20 hearing for legal activist Chen Guangcheng.

¶3. (C) The city where Gao was arrested, Dongying, is several hours drive from Linyi, Shandong Province where Chen is slated to be tried tomorrow. Hu had no information on whether Gao's arrest was related to the upcoming trial, but Gao has traveled in Shandong in the past collecting information about abuse of Falun Gong practitioners.
RANDT